Law for water harvesting

3005. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enact a law not to allow building of individual homes or housing societies without water harvesting provisions throughout the country;

(b) if so, by when an enactment is anticipated;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the targets fixed by Government to augment the water availability by reviving the traditional water system and by constructing the water harvesting structures throughout the country; and

(e) the achievement made so far through both the ways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY) : (a) to (c) The Union Government do not propose to enact a law not to allow building of individual homes or housing societies without water harvesting provisions throughout the country due to the following reasons:—

(1) Under the Constitution of India 'Water' is a State subject and, thererfore, any legislation in the matter can be considered only by the State Legislatures. However, the Ministry of Water Resources has advised the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation to make roof top rain water harvesting mandatory. Accordingly, the Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation has amended Building Bye-laws, 1983 making provision for water harvesting through storing of water run-off including rain water in all new buildings on plots of 100 square meters and above in Delhi mandatory. Besides, the State Governments of Haryana and Tamil Nadu have also issued amendments to municipal building bye-laws to make roof top rain water harvesting mandatory for specified category of buildings. The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under Section 3 (3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has also issued directions to group housing societies, institutions, schools, hotels, industrial establishments and farm houses

located in 'notified areas' of South and South West districts of NCT Delhi, Municipal Corporation of Faridabad and Ballabgarh of Haryana, Municipal Corporation of Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, Gurgaon Town and adjoining Industrial Areas of Gurgaon district of Haryana to adopt roof top rain water harvesting systems. The CGWA has also issued directions to all group housing societies in NCT of Delhi located in areas where ground water levels are more than 8 metres and are abstracting ground water to adopt roof top rain water harvesting system.

(2) Water harvesting is not required in all areas of the country. There are areas having excess rainfall and ground water level very shallow. In some of the areas, even the problem of water logging is prevalent.

(3) The objective can be achieved by creating mass awareness and organising training programmes etc. The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Water Resources, has already conducted 135 mass awareness programmes and 69 training programmes throughout the country.

(d) and (e) 'Water' being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to plan, finance and execute schemes to augment ground water resources. However, during the ninth Plan, the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has implemented a Central Sector Scheme on "Studies on Recharge to Ground Water" under which 174 artificial recharge schemes have been approved in 27 States and U.Ts. across the country. All these schemes are being implemented as per targets and 115 schemes have been completed so far. The completed schemes have shown positive impact in terms of rise in ground water level. However, no scheme to augment the water availability by reviving the traditional water system was undertaken under the above scheme. Further, with a view to augment ground water resources, the Central Government has formulated a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Artificial Recharge to Groundwater and Rain Water Harvesting" at an estimated cost of Rs.175 crore for implementation during the Tenth Plan. Under the Scheme, construction of water harvesting structures including revival of traditional water systems are envisaged. The scheme is at consultation stage.